

HOW TO
BE A
RESPONSIBLE
MAN

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HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE MAN

What is responsibility? I have used the word “responsible” because it is designed to describe the male of the species. Men were designed, created, and commanded to bear responsibility.

History of Irresponsibility: Biblical Examples

It all started with our first parents. They were given responsibility and commensurate authority. This assignment was removed and then reduced after they failed their first responsibility.

Adam was given responsibility. He not only failed the responsibility; he blamed his wife *and* God for his failure (Genesis 3:12). Adam was not a responsible husband.

Noah got drunk and lay naked in his tent. His youngest son saw him and told his older brothers. When Noah awoke from his drunkenness, he cursed his youngest son's youngest son. Getting drunk and cursing someone not responsible was not being a responsible father or grandfather (Genesis 9:20-27).

To save his own life, Abram had his wife lie for him and let the king of Egypt take her. He was not a responsible husband (Genesis 12:12-16). He did it again with Abimelech (Genesis: 20:2). Abram listened to his wife and had a son with Hagar. This brought persecu-

tion upon her and the son by Abram's wife. He was not a responsible husband or father (Genesis 16). There are repercussions from his actions today, some 4,000 years later.

Each of these men was saved by faith (Hebrews 11). We can continue this list of irresponsible men: Lot, Isaac, Jacob, Reuben, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Moses, Aaron, Samson, Gideon, Eli, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Jehosaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, Josiah, etc. These were the good guys. They were irresponsible in their relations to women, their wives, and their children.

History of Irresponsibility: Real-Life Examples and Evidence

You may argue with or misunderstand the point of this article (that men were designed and commanded to bear responsibility) because your experience was different. It may seem wrong to you because:

- The present culture says otherwise.
- Your mother provided the stability in your home.
- Your mother was dominant, but not stable.
- Your father was not self-disciplined, and therefore over-disciplined the children.
- Your father was dominant, but irresponsible.
- Many other combinations.

What are the signs of an irresponsible man? The primary evidence is selfishness or self-centeredness. All of the characteristics listed below are subsets of this selfishness. There are many signs of irresponsibility in the male of the species. Unfortunately, this includes many Christian men, or at least men who think they are Christians.

In general, men want the privileges of being male without the corresponding responsibility. What are these privileges?

Sexual gratification:

- Marriage
- Free sex (promiscuous sex, paid-for sex, unloving sex, rape, or incest)
- Homosexual sex (monogamous or promiscuous)
- Pornography

Pride:

- They need to “make it” in their profession and have other people know they have made it. If they have not made it, they will excuse or justify themselves or blame the boss or others. Men are much guiltier of this than women.
- They brag and boast of good things, innocent things, and evil things. They must draw attention to their prowess in whatever physical, mental, or athletic endeavor they are good at.
- They succumb to peer pressure and dirty talk.
- If they are bigger, older, or have more authority, they bully those under them.

Fun/Pleasure:

- Innocent fun. Hobbies like woodworking or stamp collecting or activities like hunting, fishing, skiing, snowmobiling, fitness, jogging, basketball, skydiving, golfing, computer games, etc.
- Evil fun. Doing things for kicks, practical jokes, kidding (Proverbs 26:18), stealing, heterosexual activity outside marriage, homosexual activity, getting drunk, lying. Any of the hobbies mentioned above can also become evil when it turns into an obsession, an addiction. This kind of addiction can be hard to recognize because the fun seems innocent. The fun becomes irresponsible when it occupies a man’s *thinking*, his *time*, or his *money* beyond what can or ought to be afforded.

A final sign of irresponsibility is that the man does not want to be responsible. He would rather be waited on than serve. What's more, he thinks that it is a God-sanctioned privilege to be irresponsible.

Reasons Some Men Are Irresponsible

There are non-Christian men who are responsible husbands and fathers. There are Christian men who are *not* responsible. Whatever the initial reasons for this irresponsibility in Christian men are, it should not, must not, continue. Here are a few possible reasons:

- They grew up in broken homes.
- They grew up with fathers who were irresponsible.
- The men they know at their jobs, in their communities, and as relatives are poor examples and teachers.

If a man becomes a Christian out of this kind of background, there is one automatic change and several required changes.

Attitudes about Irresponsibility (from Both Men & Women)

Today, irresponsibility is no longer recognized as failure. Men and women think it is normal, even a birthright. Men may still want the authority that comes with it, but they do not want the responsibility itself. That compounds the problem. There are two humanist views of masculinity circulating today:

- Muscular, dominant, boastful, sexual prowess, professional performance. One famous athlete said that he had had 24,000 women. Krishna, a fictitious Hindu deity, was supposed to have had tens of thousands of wives and to have committed adultery with 1,000 other men's wives without the men knowing it. This is the kind of "masculinity" you find in dirty talk and novels for men.
- Thoughtful, kind, tender, irresponsible until he meets a good

woman who straightens him out in marriage. This view is found in romantic novels written by women for women.

God made men with testosterone and estrogen. The natural man lives by pleasant sensations that God has given as a means, and he makes them into an end in themselves. “This is the way I was made; this is the way I will act.” He follows his stream of consciousness.

Results of Irresponsibility

God built a need for respect into the male of the human race. All men need this respect as they are growing up. God made men incomplete, so He made women to be their helpers. This incompleteness is apparent in men’s need for respect. That is why God requires women to respect their husbands.

Men want to have authority and respect. Is this wrong? No, not in itself. But responsibility comes with authority, and many men have abdicated this responsibility. Authority without responsibility makes men tyrants. If they pass the responsibility to their wives but do not delegate the corresponding authority to them, those wives *cannot* carry out the responsibility, and the husband *will not*.

Many of the Christian men I know today (as opposed to fifty years ago) come from families with irresponsible fathers and grandfathers. If they coast (even though they are now Christians), it will be downhill. They will imitate their fathers. They will be irresponsible to their wives and children, and maybe with money and things. They might be very responsible on the job and in their profession and have respect there, but not in their homes.

God’s Commands Concerning Responsibility: Direct Commands

To the male of the species God has given responsibilities that fit the fruit of the Spirit more than the works of the flesh.

Responsibility comes with the territory. The first territory was earth,

and the first man and woman got that responsibility.

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. (Genesis 1:27-30)

It may be that the husband had the primary responsibility then because of prior creation.

I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. (1 Timothy 2:12-14)

Eve was deceived; Adam rebelled.

They also got a smaller, detailed responsibility—the Garden of Eden.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (Genesis 2:15)

After both of them failed that responsibility, it was taken from them.

To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life." (Genesis 3:17)

The husband/father is primarily responsible. We see this order in the law very clearly in Numbers 30. A husband or father is responsible for the vows made by his wife or daughter. If he cancels the vow, she is free from keeping it. If he does not cancel the vow, then the

husband, by silence, confirms it. If the woman does not keep the vow, her husband is guilty. The New Testament assigns responsibility to the father/husband in Ephesians 5:25-30, 6:4, 1 Peter 3:7, and Colossians 3:19-21.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. (Ephesians 5:25-30)

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. (1 Peter 3:7)

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. (Colossians 3:19-21)

God made man with a conscience and placed him under a moral law. After he has been redeemed, man has a new conscience and the Holy Spirit. As men are redeemed out of the world, this cultural phenomenon of wanting authority without responsibility must not be allowed to affect them.

*Brothers, each man, **as responsible to God**, should remain in the situation God called him to. (1 Corinthians 7:24)*

God called us. We are responsible to Him. We answer to Him. We are *accountable* to Him.

As Christians, men and women together are given great, common, moral responsibilities. We can see this throughout the Bible. However, I want to draw attention to those assigned responsibilities given to men only. After that, I will draw some extensions that also apply only to the men. You may argue with these, but please be careful that in doing so you are not trying to avoid a genuine responsibility.

“And he will rule over you”:

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” (Genesis 3:16)

Responsible for the vows of his wife and daughters:

When a young woman still living in her father’s household makes a vow to the Lord or obligates herself by a pledge and her father hears about her vow or pledge but says nothing to her, then all her vows and every pledge by which she obligated herself will stand. But if her father forbids her when he hears about it, none of her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand; the Lord will release her because her father has forbidden her. . . If a woman living with her husband makes a vow or obligates herself by a pledge under oath and her husband hears about it but says nothing to her and does not forbid her, then all her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand. But if her husband nullifies them when he hears about them, then none of the vows or pledges that came from her lips will stand. Her husband has nullified them, and the Lord will release her. Her husband may confirm or nullify any vow she makes or any sworn pledge to deny herself. (Numbers 30:3-5, 10-13)

Children:

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” (Genesis 1:28)

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s

youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court. (Psalms 127:3-5)

Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the Lord. (Psalm 128:1-4)

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. (Colossians 3:21)

Faithfulness to marriage vows:

You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth. "The man who hates and divorces his wife," says the Lord, the God of Israel, "does violence to the one he should protect," says the Lord Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful. (Malachi 2:14-16)

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery." (Matthew 19:3-9)

No adultery/no coveting:

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)
You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. (Exodus 20:17)

No looking/no touching:

Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (1 Corinthians 7:1 NKJV)

For those who have increased responsibility in the church, the lists in 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-6:8 also apply.

God's Commands Concerning Responsibility: Principles Taught through Stories & Parables

While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.

He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'

"But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

"He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

"The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.'

"Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have

been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

"The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.'

"His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.'

"Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.'

"His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?'

"Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.'

"'Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!'

"He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.'" (Luke 19:11-27)

This short story speaks of the responsible actions of two servants and the irresponsible actions of a third. It also tells of rebellious subjects. They were all held accountable. We are all subjects or servants of God. The servants are given special responsibilities.

There is a similar story in Matthew 25:

Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained

five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more."

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

The man with two bags of gold also came. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more."

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. "Master," he said, "I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you."

His master replied, "You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest." (Matthew 25:14-27)

The principle is laid out in Luke 16:

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the

one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. (Luke 16:10-13)

These two parables are talking about the kingdom of God. The master assigned responsibilities according to the servants' respective abilities. The irresponsible servant in Matthew was wicked and lazy, and the one in Luke was judged wicked. Both of them endeavored to place the blame on the master to cover up their own wickedness.

Being irresponsible is being wicked or being wicked and lazy. I will continue to use the word "irresponsible," but remember it is a synonym for these two words.

Characteristics of a Responsible Man

What are the characteristics of the responsible man?

- He receives orders and commands without complaining or arguing (Philippians 2:14).
- He stretches and grows into a job he has to do. It does not break him.
- He is not defensive when he is accused, whether the accusation is true or false.
- He does not pass the buck; he does not blame others above, alongside, or below him.
- He is not short-tempered.
- He assumes the burden of supporting his family. Whether by work or by faith, the burden is his.

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8)

- He teaches his children to be responsible.
- He provides a secure environment for his wife and children.
- He will not scold his wife. He certainly will not beat her. He

will nourish and cherish her. He will nourish and admonish his children.

- He protects his family from all kinds of evil: physical, spiritual, and emotional.
- He is not selfish with his money, things, or time.
- He is a man of prayer.

I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. (1 Timothy 2:8)

- He is a servant to others.
- He is self-controlled. In Titus 2, Titus is instructed to teach the older men “to be temperate, worthy of respect and *self-controlled*... Similarly, encourage the young men to be *self-controlled*.”

*For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live **self-controlled**, upright and **godly** lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:11-14)*

Responsibility means that a man takes *complete* responsibility for his actions, even if an action was irresponsible: for his wife and children, and for the sins of fornication and the consequent pregnancy, mother, and baby.

God requires men to love their wives and wives to respect their husbands. There is an obvious reason for this in creation. God made women with a great need to be loved, to be protected, and to be made secure. God made men with a need to be respected. Both were made incomplete. Man was made incomplete first, so woman was made to complete him. He in turn was to complete the need that was created in her.

Common Excuses and/or Justifications

- Pass the buck.
The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it. (Genesis 3:12)
- I did not wake up in time.
- He disobeyed me, so I lost my temper.
- She does not respect me.
- I need time alone.
- I needed that extra Harley Davidson (or shotgun or fishing rod or video game).
- I told her I loved her when we got married. Didn’t she believe me?
- The boss is too hard.
- The boss doesn’t know his job.

All these excuses are based on one of two things:

- Your own selfishness
- Blaming your actions (or lack of action) on the other guy

This is a partial list. It could easily be much longer. Your response may be, “Let’s be real,” or, “A man would have to be godly to be responsible.” Men who make the second objection *should not get married*. Does that mean I want him to have irresponsible sex instead of responsible sex? No. A man is not allowed to be immoral just because he does not get married.

Taking Action

Assuming you think that God had a good idea in His creation and assignments to men and women, here are a few ways to prepare yourself and your children to be the right kind of husband and father.

The automatic change is a man’s conversion, his salvation. The Bible describes this event in strong terms. Here are a few of them:

- He has been crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6, Colossians 2:20).
- He has risen with Christ (Colossians 3:1).
- He is dead to sin (Romans 6:2).
- He has put off the old man (Colossians 3:9).
- He has put on the new man (Colossians 3:10).

This conversion determines the necessity and the *possibility* of all subsequent requirements (see Romans 8:3-4). Because these things are true of all believers, it is *normal* for a Christian man to be responsible.

How to Become a Responsible Man

1. Become a Christian. If you need help with this, ask a Christian friend or write, call, or email Community Christian Ministries. You can also request a copy of the gospel of John and the booklet *Becoming a Christian* from us.¹ If you are already a Christian, confess all known sin to God.²
2. Repair your relationship with your parents (Malachi 4:6).³
3. Desire responsibility.

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. (1 Timothy 3:1)

4. Humble yourself before God.
Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. (1 Peter 5:6)
5. Follow the example of godly men.
6. Read the biographies of godly men such as Hudson Taylor, George Mueller, James Fraser, R.G. LeTourneau, George Whitfield, and R.C. Chapman.

¹ Request by emailing ccm@moscow.com or calling (208) 883-0997.

² Visit <http://ccmbooks.org/audio-resources/> for a free audio download of my talk, "Confession of Sin."

³ See "Relationships with Parents" in *How to Be Free from Bitterness*. Free download available here: <http://ccmbooks.org/free-literature/>.

7. *Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Timothy 3:22).*
8. Be a man of the Word: reading, studying and memorizing it, meditating on it, obeying it.
9. Be a man of prayer: praise, thanksgiving, supplication, intercession.
10. Recognize that irresponsibility is a sin, gross wickedness. Confess this wickedness; repent of it, forsake it.
11. When you read the scriptures, latch onto the assignments, not just the authority.

For Raising Sons

Before they get to have authority, men should be *under* authority. If they have a difficult time submitting to authority, they become petty tyrants when they, in turn, find themselves in positions of authority.

Authority and responsibility go together. If a man has great responsibility but does not have commensurate authority, he is unable to carry out his responsibility. If he has authority but no responsibility, he ends up giving orders when there is nothing to do. Again, he is a petty tyrant.

God built the need for respect into the human race. All men need it as they are growing up. If they do not get it, they ask for it by bragging and boasting. If they do not have anything to brag about, they invent something. They lie and brag.

Both sexes need two things given to them from infancy: love and respect. They need these *from* both sexes. However, as they grow older, a girl needs love more than she needs respect (although she still needs both), and a boy needs respect more than he needs love (although he needs both). How can you tell? Little boys brag, and little girls flirt. The boys are asking for respect, and the girls are asking for love. It is a poor way to get either, but it shows that the need is there. Children

who are very secure in love and respect do not brag or flirt.

If we want our sons to mature into responsible men, our part is five-fold:

1. Give them much love and respect from both sexes of parents.
2. Do not provoke them to wrath or discouragement (Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21).
3. Give them the “training and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).
4. Give them responsibility as they grow older. The responsibility should be enough to stretch them, but not so much that it breaks them.
5. *Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth (Deuteronomy 11:18–21).*

As a boy continues to grow, he wants and needs more opportunities to be responsible. Sometimes he is given responsibility before he is ready for it. If he cannot handle it, if it is too much for him, he becomes irresponsible. He finds it easy to blame his failures on other people and on the circumstances. If this is an isolated event, he may learn from it. However, if he is regularly given responsibility before he is ready, it is sure to establish a lifelong habit of irresponsibility. (Sometimes boys will demand freedom when they are not ready for it. The results are the same if it is given.)

It is best to give increased responsibility in *small* increments, but always more than he *thinks* he can handle—but not too much more. This way you ensure his growth—strong, normal growth. If he is

given too little responsibility or not given it until long after he requests it, you are teaching him to be rebellious. But when he is given responsibility he can handle, he is successful with it. This increases his respect for his father and for himself, and he is ready for more responsibility.

His successes should be 1) acknowledged, 2) not criticized, and 3) not flattered. Acknowledging success stimulates a desire for more. Correcting successes with a critical spirit causes discouragement (Colossians 3:21). Sometime a son will work even harder hoping for a “well done” from his father, and he never gets one. Flattery is over-praise for non-accomplishment. This is an encouragement to be irresponsible. It is not an expression of love. Love is present in defeat and in success; it is not tied to accomplishment. It can be expressed with hugs or spansks, but not with flattery or a critical spirit.

Teaching Relationship to Women

Early in his life, a boy should be taught and required to respect and love and be considerate of his mother and his sisters (both older and younger). As he approaches puberty, he should be taught about the female population outside his family. Respect and consideration should again be stressed. Because we are commanded to love our neighbors, he should be taught to love. This is not a command to *express* affection and love to girls.

He should also be taught to respect, be polite to, and not cut down girls. They will be grateful for the former and hurt if he fails in the latter. They may respond with counter-cuts, which makes them less feminine. Boys should be taught not to touch a girl in any way that would cause physical harm *or* in any way that would cause her to respond sexually to them, or in any way that would hurt her emotionally.

Masculinity does not have to be proved with muscles, sexual prowess, bragging, etc. True masculinity is established by taking the responsibility that God has given you.

Results of Responsibility

Besides the wonderful security of having the seal of the Holy Spirit in our lives, there is a security that comes from good relationships in our homes. The major source of security in the home outside the Holy Spirit has been assigned by God to the husband/father. He is the one around whom the home revolves. The wife looks to him, and the children look to him. He is the rock in the home. He is the source of strength and stability. He provides wisdom, decisions, and financial and emotional security.